

THE
GRASIERS
ADVOCATE:

OR,
Free THOUGHTS of WOOL,

AND THE
WOOLLEN TRADE.

Occasioned chiefly by reading and comparing
two late Pieces upon the Subject, viz.

The Consequences of TRADE, &c.
By a Draper of London.

AND

*An impartial Enquiry into the Importance and
present State of the Woollen Manufactories
of GREAT BRITAIN,*

By J. GEE.

Are these Things so?

L O N D O N.

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THE
GRASIERS
ADVOCATE, &c.

CONCERNING Wool, and the Woollen-Trade, which have, for some Time, been the Subject of popular Complaint, have lately exercised the Pens and Imaginations of several, and are now the Object of Consideration in Parliament; two Pieces have particularly excited Attention: One intituled, *The Consequences of Trade, &c.* by a *Draper of London*; the other, *An Impartial Enquiry, &c.* by Mr. Gee; each of them setting forth a sad and lamentable State of the Woollen Manufactory; and each of them proposing a Scheme, from which great Matters are to be expected, even to the enriching of the whole Nation.

As to the first of these Writers, the *Draper*; confining myself to that Part only which relates to the present State of the Woollen Manufactory *here* and in *France*, the Sum of what he says, is briefly this, “ That our
“ Woollen Trade is under a very great De-
“ cay—That the Cause of it is, the Expor-
“ tation

“ tation of Wooll unmanufactured. He of-
 “ fers his Reasons, in Proof of such Decay ;
 “ and, by a Calculation from Mr. *London*,
 “ supposes *France* to have 500,000 Packs of
 “ our Wool yearly ; by preventing which,
 “ the Nation would gain annually no less than
 “ 42,000,000 *l.*—That the Advantage to
 “ *France* over us, by our Wool, is, from their
 “ being able to carry their Goods cheaper to
 “ Market than we can.—That this, besides
 “ another Reason, from the Nature of their
 “ own Wool (which, he says, is worth no-
 “ thing without ours) is owing to the Low-
 “ ness of their Artificers Wages ; which we
 “ cannot reduce (*with us*) so as to be upon
 “ the Par with them ; or, if we could, so
 “ so far as Wages are lowered here, in Pro-
 “ portion, must the Rents of *England* a-
 “ bate.—But that all Endeavours of this
 “ Kind are unnecessary, seeing that, by keep-
 “ ing our Wool at Home, the foreign Market
 “ will be all to ourselves, and the Price of
 “ our Woollen Goods what we please :”
 And, in order to keep our Wool at Home,
 Mr. *Webber*’s well known Scheme, of an uni-
 versal Registry in Charter, is recommended,
 as most effectual, by this Author.

Mr. *Gee*, pretty much to the same Purpose
 with the *London Draper*, says, “ The Decay
 “ of Trade, of our Woollen Manufactory
 “ particular, is a just Ground of general
 “ Complaint, owing wholly to the illicit
 “ Exporta-

“ Exportation of Wool *British* and *Irish* ;
 “ the Laws to prevent which, hitherto en-
 “ acted, have been ineffectual : On the con-
 “ trary, that even within four Years last past,
 “ the Woollen Manufactories of these King-
 “ doms have been surprizingly upon the
 “ Decline.—That the West of *England* is
 “ a sad Instance of it, and most other Parts,
 “ except the North ; the Effects of which
 “ are Tenements uninhabited, Farms lying
 “ waste, Lands uncultivated, Abatement of
 “ Rents ; while *France* is aggrandizing itself
 “ with immense Profits from *British* and
 “ *Irish* Wool ; by the Assistance of which
 “ and *which only*, they are enabled to manu-
 “ facture their own, so as to rival us in our
 “ Trade ; although, such as it is, they grow
 “ 600,000 Packs yearly.” To prevent this
 then, he proposes a Scheme, as he thinks,
 not only more plausible and unexceptionable
 than any one hitherto published, but the *only*
one that can effectually answer the Purpose ;
 the Execution of which would be attended,
 according to a Calculation he has given, with
 a yearly Gain of 3 1,095,000 *l.* which Scheme
 is a Survey, and a Registry regulated in the
 Manner of the Excise.

Tho’ I am ready to doubt, in some Re-
 spects, and willing to hope, in others, that
 Things may have been somewhat exaggerated
 by these two Writers ; as I cannot contradict
 them, so I shall rather chuse to reason from,
 than

than dispute the Truth of their Accounts and Calculations, which agree pretty nearly in many Things, particularly in the Necessity of an universal Registry ; only differing about the Method of it ; in which Respect, Mr. Gee, is, for Reasons, too obvious to be mentioned, preferable beyond all Comparison.

The Laws now in Force, for preventing the Exportation of Wool, of which Mr. Gee has given an Abstract, sufficiently, one should think, infer the Expediency of keeping our Wool at Home, as well as provide against its being carried Abroad ; notwithstanding which, he has accounted for, I won't say proved the Truth of his Hypothesis, of an immense Quantity (above 450,000 Packs) yearly exported, by supposing that the illicit Traders can deal at an Advantage of 1200 *per Cent.* ; for that, rather than not have our Wool, the *French*, he says, can afford to give 78 *l.* a Pack for it.

And, if *these Things are so* ; and it be really true, that the illicit Exportation of Wool prevails to such a Degree ; and if fewer Millions, than either the *Draper* or Mr. Gee speaks of, are to be gain'd by preventing the Practice : Our Wool, *British* and *Irish* is, no doubt, a very rich Mine, well worth preserving and working ; and, to that End, ought to be doubly guarded. For which Purpose, the Laws already made, having so far failed, as is represented, a universal Registry, to be sure,
is

is absolutely necessary. The only Difficulty is, to hit upon a Method, which shall be most practicable, least expensive and grievous to the Subject, and at the same Time, *effectual*. If it is not effectual, no End is answered.—But if it be ; the *End* being obtained, I should have but a low Opinion of any one's publick Spirit, who, in a Case of such vast Importance to his Country, should quarrel with the *Means*.

Mr. *Webber's* Scheme of a Registry in Charter, allowing, to Offenders, the Possibility of gaining any Thing like 1200 *per Cent.* by their Transgression, will never keep Persons so inclined, not Patentees themselves, within the Bounds of the Law and their Duty ; nor can we conceive, according to the Accounts we have, any Regulation, much different from that of the Excise, sufficient for the Purpose ; neither do I see any Difference between an Excise-Man, and another Officer, of publick Appointment, except that the former, being subject to a Variety of Checks, cannot neglect his Duty, with the same Impunity, that some others are supposed to do ; which is the very Reason, why, in this Case, above all others, so far as it is practicable and necessary, something like it should take Place.

I agree then, with both these Writers, for the Expediency of a universal Registry, and, in the main, with Mr. *Gee* about the Method of it ; tho' not without differing from him in some Particulars. Upon the Foot of his Scheme,

Scheme, I think it not quite certain, that, by Reason of his proposed Registry of Wool, the Revenue arising from the Duties on Leather, Soap, &c. can be spared ; nor, if it could, that the Officers now employed in those Duties, would be sufficient for all his Purposes ; especially for attending on the Day or Days of shearing, in order to take an Account of every Person's Wool, and its Weight, &c. The Crop of Wool in every Country, is chiefly cut within about three Weeks or less, from the Beginning of the common Shearing-Season to the Conclusion of it ; which commences sooner or later by a Week or two in different Places. And, within the ordinary District of an Excise-Officer, different Persons are not only shearing their Sheep on the same Day or Days, in the same Parish, but in different and distant Places and Parishes of the same District. Wool-winding also being a Profession, wherein one Person necessarily serves many Masters, he cannot attend them all on their respective Days of shearing. So that, in this first Instance, what Mr. Gee allots for the Business of a single Officer, would be Work for a large Number ; and a small Hundred, in a grasing Country especially, would, in that Particular, employ as many, as there now are Excise-Men in half a County. On which Account, and because it would be but the Work of a short Season (all the Wool of the Country (excepting the Case of fat Sheep sent
to

to *London* in the Spring) being shorn and wound up within the Space of about Six Weeks at the most) I should think a mix'd Method, between Mr. *Webber's* Registry and that of Surveying wholly by an Excise-man, or publick Officer of any other Denomination for this first Purpose, preferable to either singly.

I think, for Instance, that the Farmer, &c. having made, some Days before his Time of Shearing, an exact Entry of the Number of his Sheep, at the publick Office appointed, instead of an Officer attending from thence upon every Person on their Day or Days of shearing, certain of the Parish, with the Assistance of a sworn Wool-winder, might weigh and take an Account in Writing of the Number of Fleeces, and the Weight of the Wool of every individual Person within their Parish, and lay such Account before a Meeting of Justices, or Commissioners of the Land Tax, or any other Set of Commissioners duly appointed, to assemble at convenient Times and Places for the Purpose; where an Officer for the District should attend also, with a Copy of the several Entries made before Shearing, in order to have the two Accounts compared, and to digest such the Parish Officers Accounts into a proper Form, and transcribe two fair Copies of the same, to be signed for every Parish by the Parish Officers and the Wool-winder respectively, and

the whole by the sitting Justices or Commissioners; one Copy of which to be returned into the Office, the other to be filed up, or enter'd into a Register, to be kept by the said Justices or Commissioners, and at proper Periods transmitted to the Clerk of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions.

By these or the like Means a good deal of Expencc might be saved, and (as fewer publick Officers would suffice) some Odium avoided, without the least danger of frustrating the Design of preventing the illicit Exportation of Wool; for wherever the present Fraud of Smuggling may lie chiefly, I think it cannot easily be imputed to the Farmers, for obvious Reasons. But under a Regulation like this, besides the Impossibility of the thing, they would have no tolerable Inducement to it. For as much the greatest Share of every Grower's Wool would unavoidably be brought to the publick Account by an established Registry, that Man must be void of all Sense and Consideration, who would hazard his whole Fortune, by endeavouring to secrete (for the uncertain Chance of smuggling) a small Part of his whole Quantity, from which at best but very little Gain, comparatively, could be expected. Mr. Gee then is quite right in supposing a Registry of Wool immediately from the Grower, managed after the manner of the Excise, not liable to those Frauds which are practised in some Commodities

dities of foreign Growth (although subject to those Laws); which, if once imported by Stealth, may possibly be so clandestinely managed, as never to fall under the Cognizance of any Inland Officer. But the Quantity of Land which every Grower occupies within a Parish, the Number of Sheep he keeps, the Weight of Wool he cuts, and the Manner how he disposes of it, being from Circumstances pretty nearly known in every Neighbourhood, as Things now are; in the Case of a Registry, such as has been mentioned, it would be next to impossible for any of this Class of Men to falsify in their first Account, or be guilty of a subsequent Fraud, without not only making themselves suspected, but liable to be detected many ways.

Every Person's Number of Sheep then, under certain Penalties, being before shearing (as Mr. *Gee* directs) enter'd at a publick Office, and after shearing, and the Wool wound, weighed up, &c. by certain Officers of the Parish, and the Account thereof, thro' the Hands of Justices or Commissioners a second time transmitted into the same Office, it may from thenceforward fall under the sole Inspection and Management thereof. I would only observe, that as it has been rightly judg'd necessary (by Mr. *Gee*) to secure the Fidelity of Officers, and the Attention of the Government, by a Duty upon Wool; so that Duty, whatever it is, instead of being levied all at

once, should for the same Reasons be portioned out into several Times of Payment: As *1st*, upon Sale of the Wool. *2^{dly}*, upon its being reduced into Yarn. *3^{dly}*, upon its being compleatly manufactured; at which time it should receive some indelible Mark, for the Prevention of Fraud; and lastly, be attended with a Duty or Premium (as should be thought most convenient) upon Exportation to a foreign Market. I conclude it practicable to ascertain the Quantity of Yarn or Worsted to be expected from a given Quantity of Wool; also the Quantity of Cloth or Stuff which such a Quantity of Yarn or Worsted may be expected to produce, according to the several Sorts and Kinds of each, into which they are capable of being ranged and distinguished. It would be necessary indeed to make Allowances for all possible Waste in the Course of its being manufactured, by fix'd Rates and Proportions (according to the best Judges) as near the Truth as possible, yet rather in favour of the Dealer than otherwise; after which an Ounce of Wool comparatively could not be secreted, but that it must appear from the Books of the Offices, so as to fix the Blame and a Punishment accordingly upon the negligent or guilty Party.

Thus coming to the Knowledge, *1st*, of the Stock of Wool in hand; *2^{dly}*, of the yearly Increase of it; *3^{dly}*, of the Quantity of it every Year manufactured; and *4^{thly}*, of the
Quantity

Quantity of that Manufacture exported, we might learn to know the true State of our Case in regard to Wool and the Woollen Trade, without being liable to the Impositions of Craft and Clamour; the Wool-grower and Manufacturer both would have fair Play, and the Merchant or Factor *so far* no just Cause of Complaint. The Price of Wool in this Case would not only rise and fall, as the Quantity of Wool grown should be in proportion to the Quantity wanted to be manufactured; and the Price of Labour to the Artificer, in proportion as the Quantity manufactured should be to that of woollen Goods exported and consumed; but the People being by this means let into the true Cause, whatever it was; whenever Things happen'd worse than they wish'd, would not only learn where to look for a Remedy, but till it could be had, to expect it with Patience.

The Number of Sheep kept in these Islands, consequently the Quantity of Wool grown, is said to vary greatly, according to Seasons. The determinate Number of Sheep and Quantity of Wool, upon an Average I find is wholly conjectural; which are good Reasons for a Registry, as well to prevent the illicit Exportation of Wool, as in order to ascertain the Truth of those Accounts upon which present Complaints are grounded, and of those Calculations, by which we are made to have Hopes of *so many Millions* to be gained. In
short,

short, in every View a Registry is convenient at least; unless it can be said, that neither *France*, nor any other Foreigners do get any considerable Quantity of our Wool, or that it is no Hurt to us if they do; in which latter Case (which is far from being my Opinion) the Laws against exporting it should be repealed, that every Grower might alike make his Advantage of it.

But our Wool for Cloathing is said to be, to all the World, as much a Necessary of Life as any thing else; *which is true in a good measure*; it is also said to be more peculiarly the Growth of our Country than any other thing; *which I believe is very true*. And the Riches of a Nation (containing no Gold or Silver Mines) arising out of the Labours of the People, and from the Exportation of what their Labour produces; these are undoubted Reasons why we should, if possible, manufacture all the Wool we grow.

The *Draper* says, “ If we are wise enough
 “ to manufacture our own Wool at Home,
 “ we must have the serving all the World
 “ with that kind of Woollen Goods; we may
 “ have the Market to ourselves, and fix our
 “ own Prices upon the Goods we carry to
 “ it.” Mr. *Gee*, “ If the clandestine Run-
 “ nage of our Wool be prevented; as no Fo-
 “ reigners can manufacture to Advantage
 “ without it, we may fix our Goods at what
 “ Rate we please, and dispose of them at
 “ what-

“ whatever Rates we think proper to fix “ them ;” and *both* speak of the *Advance of Wool* to the Grower, to double its present Value, at least, as a certain necessary Consequence of their Measures taking Place.

And, if the clandestine Exportation of Wool is effectually stopped ; as certainly it ought to be, no doubt, but, after a Time, our Markets would mend Abroad ; there would be a greater Demand, at a better Price. The Merchant would have a quicker Return, and probably a larger Profit ; and the poor labouring Manufacturer constant Work at least, if not higher Wages.—But, whether our foreign Demands would so far grow upon us, and our Prices advance so high, to make the Gain to the Nation so very considerably great, as has been computed, is what I am not skilful enough to know ; only I distrust, in that Case, the promised Gain to the Grower, by the advanced Price of his Wool ; am rather apprehensive, if no particular Provision is made for their Relief (I only argue from the *Draper's* and *Mr. Gee's* own Assertions and Calculations, the Consequence of which, I suppose them not to have perceived) that Wool, instead of rising to double its Price, may sink to half the present Value of it. If this shall seem a Paradox, I must beg my Reader's Patience, till he has heard me out.

If the illicit Exportation of Wool prevails so far as my Authors have represented, I make

no

no doubt of our having Merchant Adventurers, *that Way*, in this Kingdom, as well as in *Ireland*; indeed the Necessity of a Registry *here* stands upon that Supposition; in which Case, tho' the *English Grower* has no Hand in the Male-practice, yet low as the present Price of Wool is, considering there is such a Practice (if indeed there be) it is better for *him* that it should be in *England as well as Ireland*, than that it should be, to the same Degree, in *Ireland alone*.

But if the Wool of *England and Wales* should be brought under the Regulation *proposed*, without subjecting *Scotland*, the Islands of *Guernsey, Jersey, &c.* and particularly *Ireland*, to Laws equivalent, I might have said, to the same Laws, to be executed in the same exact Manner, their Wool would go abroad but so much the more, to the supplying Foreigners, in as ample Manner as, perhaps, at present they are supplied; and the State of our Woollen Trade would *then* be in no better Condition than it is *now*. Our Wool, to the Grower, would fall in its Price, in Proportion, as Smuggling should be prevented *here* and increased *there*; and the Tax upon it, under the Notion of its being made dearer, would be just *so much* out of the Grower's Pocket, consequently, no other than an additional Land-Tax; which, computing it, according to Mr. Gee, at 750,000 *l.* could not be less to some grasing Countries than three or
four

four Shillings *per* Pound. For tho' it should not be paid, but by the Buyer, yet, as he would consider himself for it, in the Price he should give for the Wool, it would, in effect, be a Tax upon the Grower, and, in consequence upon the Owner of that Land, whereon the Wool did grow.

But, further, suppose not only *England* and *Wales*, but *Scotland*, *Ireland*, &c. put under the same Regulation, as to Wool, and, to prevent any Hardship to *Ireland*, and in order to do Justice to *England*, the *Irish* Wool to be imported hither, (as Mr. Gee advises, and without doing which, it may reasonably be imagined that all our other Care will be ineffectual) the Consequence will be, that we shall have, at least, 1,000,000 Packs of Wool to be yearly manufactured; however, 500,000 Packs more than we do manufacture, of which we are to make an Advantage (according to Mr. Gee) of 31,095,000 *l.* according the *Draper* 42,000,000; the Growers Share of which, the latter says will be 12,000,000; the former, 4,500,000 *l.* But must not this latter Part of the Account be thus understood at least? If we have Hands to manufacture so large a Quantity as 1,000,000 Packs of Wool; and is not *that* a proper Subject of Enquiry?

According to an Estimate given by the *Draper*, three Packs of Wool will employ very near 600 Persons a Week; and from

some little Information I have received touching the single Article of Spinning, (all Things being considered, *viz.* the different Age, Sex and Capacity of the Persons *so* employed, that they are not alike expert and diligent) I believe he might have said full 600 ; and, for the Sake of an even Number, I chuse to compute so. Now, Feasts, Festivals, Fairs and Markets, Harvest, with the Contingencies of Sickness and hard Frosts, being taken into the Account, it may be reckoned, that the Manufacturers, upon an Avarage, don't perform more than forty Weeks Work in the whole Year. Consequently accounting 600 Persons to work up 120 Packs in a Year, which is after the Rate of five Persons to a Pack, 5,000,000 Persons are requisite to work up 1,000,000 in a Year ; and the Question is, whether we can furnish so many Hands for that particular Branch of Business.

The Draper supposes 13 or 14,000,000 to be more than the whole Number of our Inhabitants ; I presume he means in *Great Britain*. Mr. Gee, from Sir *William Petty*, reckons about 10,000,000 in *England* and *Wales*. Imagine then 20,000,000 Souls in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, — Nay, say 25,000,000 ; admitting it will require 5,000,000 to manufacture 1,000,000 Packs of Wool ; and that we grow that Quantity ; let any one consider with himself, how many of these are of Non-age and superannuated ;
how

how many of Rank and Condition above all Business, retaining many Servants ; let any one consider with himself, our Mines of Coal, Tin, Iron, Lead, &c. and besides the two great ones, of Linen in *Ireland* and *Scotland*, and of Silk in *England*, how many other *Manufactories*, Trades, Employments, Businesses, Professions, &c. there are among us, and in how great Numbers, equally necessary to Society, and to these Kingdoms ; and see, if *one fifth Part* of the whole Number can possibly be set apart for the manufacturing of Wool. I think not ; and am sorry for it. — Nay, I think I might say, that a tenth Part of the People cannot be spared for that Work.

But what of all that, (perhaps it will be said) ? Why, the Consequence, I apprehend, would be, however well it might fare in that Case with the Manufacturer and the Merchant, the *Wool-Grower* must have a very bad Time of it ; to whom the Advantage proposed is, at best, but reversionary, *i. e.*

“ when our unwrought Wool, that has been “ exported, is wrought up and consumed.”

So that the Exportation of Wool being stopped, as proposed, before the Advantage expected can take Place, we must have, in *England*, a very great Stock of Wool beforehand. After which, imagining but 200 ^{thousand} Packs to be produced yearly, more than ^{can} be manufactured ; and the Market will be so

constantly over-stocked, that, however well the Manufacturer may dispose of his Goods, he may certainly fix the *Price of Wool* low, in a manner, as he pleases, and buy it at the Price he fixes; and the gaudy Prospect of thirty Shillings a Tod for it, may end in six, seven, or eight.

Strange as this may seem, hard as it would be, I can easily imagine three Persons equally necessitous, with equal Quantities of Wool to sell, and their only possible Chapmen having Occasion to purchase no more than *two Thirds* of the whole. The Buyers in that Case, knowing their own Strength, and the Sellers Weakness, as is natural in the Course of Trade, take the Advantage accordingly; the Consequence is, that *one* cannot sell at any Price; the *other two*, only, at what Price the Buyer pleases.

Thus, if the Premises of my Authors are true, and I have reasoned right from them, the Conclusion would be, from the Introduction of *Irish Wool*, as great a Number of worthy Persons equally distressed in their Circumstances, as those who are now petitioning to Parliament for Relief. Such, according to the *London Draper* and Mr. Gee, is the Dilemma we are under, seemingly, with Regard to our Wool, that, by avoiding one Evil, we are in Danger of another, equally grievous; that we cannot sufficiently feed the Manufacturer, without, at the same Time
starving

starving the Grower, and this, for want of a competent Number of Hands to work up *all the Wool of Great Britain and Ireland.*— But, if they won't abide by their own Computations, and think to mend the Bill, by saying that the Number of Souls, in these Kingdoms, is greater than they have mentioned; I answer, (that as one of the Methods they have *both* taken for calculating the Quantity of Wool grown, has been from the Number of Sheep slaughtered, and their Method of computing such Slaughter, from the computed Number of People) so much as they shall see Cause to increase the Number of People beyond their first Estimate, (by their own Rule) *so much* will the computed Number of Sheep, and Quantity of Wool, in course, be increased; and my Argument as to the Danger of wanting Hands to work up *all the British*, with the *greatest Part of the Irish Wool*, will still retain its Force.

Nor will it be enough to say, that the Flow of Trade thus confined to *Great Britain*, will make a Resort of People for Employment and Maintenance; for though it might do it by degrees and in time, it would not sufficiently and soon enough (*without the Aid of Parliament in the mean while*) for the present, or perhaps for some succeeding Generations of Wool-growers; and the Sense of present certain Evil must needs affect a People

ple far beyond the Expectation of uncertain future Good.

Besides then barely contriving a Scheme for registering Wool, in order to confine it at Home, for the sake of employing all the idle indigent Hands in these Kingdoms; it seems to require some farther Consideration, in order to keep up the Rents of *England*, by making our Wool go at a tolerable Price, how to dispose of the Surplusage of it, *for the Benefit of the Farmer and the Land-owner, and their Dependants*. One way would be, and perhaps the best, to destroy it. But this, besides that it would be attended with other Difficulties, cannot be done without a Fund for that Purpose, which Mr. Gee's 1,125,000 *l.* (to be gained by the Exchange of Duties) would not be equal to. The illicit Exportation of 500,000 Packs of Wool (if that Report is to be credited) is an Evil justly to be complained of, for the sake of the Manufacturer, if for no other Reason. The keeping of it *all* at Home (without destroying *Part*) seems to be another, which we have equal reason to be afraid of, on account of the Grower, &c. These then being two Extremes equally bad, some proper Medium must necessarily be preferable to either of them. A Tax for destroying the whole Quantity of Wool, which, according to Accounts given us, we cannot hope to work up, even tho' we could vend and consume it, would, I apprehend,

prehend, require a greater Fund than we could conveniently raise. And yet Smuggling is a Practice in no case to be connived at; it has it seems been particularly fruitful of Mischief in this; and the particular Mischief of it has been, that it hath prevailed to such (I had almost said) an incredible degree, but that I consider the Temptation alledged to support the Belief of it, *viz.* a Possibility to the unfair Trader of dealing at an Advantage of 1200 *per Cent.*

But because 500,000 Packs of Wool smuggled into *France*, in Exchange for Wine, Brandies, &c. run into the Nation (*Duty free*) have, as it needs must, proved vastly pernicious; does it therefore follow, that a less Quantity, suppose 100, or 150,000 Packs fairly exported to foreign Parts at a high Duty, would be equally pernicious, or indeed at all so? Could they make the same Quantity of Goods with a *less* Quantity of our Wool as they do with a *greater*? Could they bring them as cheap to Market, when they should pay a *higher* Price for their *English* and *Irish* Wool, as now when they get it at a *lower*? For tho' it is said that the *French* can afford to give 78 *l.* a Pack for it, I presume it is not imagined that they do give altogether so much; altho' the successful Smuggler, by taking and running Goods in Exchange for Wool, may upon the whole reap as large or a larger Profit than that comes to. But
what

what the *British* or *Irish* Smuggler gains by running *French* Goods, is nothing out of the Pockets of *France*, as a Duty would be; which would alter the Case very much, so as to give them no such Advantage over us in our foreign Markets, as is now complained of. And might not the Disadvantages we should be thought to sustain, if any at all (on those Terms) in our foreign Trade, by suffering a limited Quantity only to go Abroad, a Quantity small in comparison of what they are now *said* to have, be fully compensated, by *easing the Land-Tax*, by *taking off the Duties from Leather, Soap, &c.* and replacing the Officers of those Duties, so far as wanted, in the woollen Registry, instead of creating new ones? Which Registry, *upon these Conditions*, altho' it should be managed in the manner of the Excise, would not *multiply publick Officers*; nor would it be *extending the Excise-Laws*; but only transferring them from Dealers in *one Kind* to Dealers in *another*. As I pretend not to the Talents, so I am not fond of the Title of a Projector, nor desirous of appearing under that Character. But supposing, upon an Avarage, 300,000 Packs of Wool to grow in *Great Britain and Ireland*, more than there are Hands sufficient to work up;

150,000

150,000 Packs exported at the
high Duty of 40 *l.* *per* Pack, } 6,000,000 *l.*
would raise the Sum of ——— }

150,000 Packs destroy'd at the
Price of 10 *l.* *per* Pack, would } 1,500,000 *l.*
amount to the Sum of ——— }

The difference in which Case
would be a Revenue to the } 4,500,000 *l.*
Publick worth yearly ——— }

When, according to the Calculations given us by the *Draper*, and from which Mr. *Gee* differs not much, there would yet be 200,000 Packs more to be wrought up (and that chiefly in *England*) than at present we do work ; which would be Employment for 1,000,000 Persons *here* more than are at present employ'd that way. And such an additional Revenue so brought into the Kingdom, and applied in the best manner, and so many Persons employ'd more than usual, must necessarily change the Face of Affairs very much, and turn the Balance of Trade greatly in our Favour. The two great Points in view, as I take it, would by this means be *probably* secured, *viz.* the Employment of our vacant Hands, and the Consumption of our Wool ; I may say, *certainly*, if my Authorities

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thorities are good. But whether or no *Great Britain* and *Ireland* do indeed produce such a Quantity of Wool yearly as 1,000,000 Packs, at the same time that the Number of Persons in these Kingdoms is not greater than has been supposed; and whether so much as 500,000 of these Packs yearly are at present exported to foreign Markets? these are Points (I desire to be so understood) which I pretend not to determine the Truth of, having only argued from, and built upon them, as if they were as true as they have been confidently asserted.

I may observe farther, that *France* it seems, before the War of King *William* and Queen *Anne*, did take some of our woollen Goods, and consequently (it may be presumed) since, till such time as they found means to get so much of our Wool, as to be able to make the same at Home. But are we sure it would be the Case again, should the *French* be totally deprived of our Wool? I am afraid not. *France* (it is said) grows 600,000 Packs of Wool yearly; which, *the Draper says*, "is worth nothing at all without ours." Mr. *Gee*, "that without a Mixture of ours they cannot manufacture to any Advantage, *i. e.* so as to rival us in our foreign Trade for woollen Goods manufactured." A Question first arises then upon the Supposition of their manufacturing 1,100,000 Packs of Wool

Wool yearly (*viz.* 600,000 of their own with 500,000 of ours) how much of the whole they send to foreign Markets? which perhaps is not very easily answered.

Only this, I think, is to be expected; that if *France* is once deprived totally of our Wool, *She* will nevertheless manufacture all her own in the best manner of which it is capable; and when that is done, oblige her Subjects to wear their own woollen Goods, and those of no other Country, especially none of *British* or *Irish* Manufacture. And besides that by Contrivance and upon Necessity, one thing may be substituted and made to serve in the place of another, it is well known that in *France* the Government is so arbitrary, that whatever Laws in Policy or Resentment are there thought fit to be enacted, the same may be enforced effectually. So that if *France* at present does not export woollen Goods in proportion to the Wool *British* and *Irish* imported thither, the Consumption of our Wool (if that should happen to be the Case) would be just so much less, by how much their Cloth, &c. exported comes short of our Wool now imported by them.

Or, if (as the *Draper* has asserted) the Wool of *France* is absolutely worth Nothing without ours, and yet, when mixed with ours, tho' in a Proportion of three *Parts*

French to one *British* or *Irish*, will make Cloth, so as to rival that made of *British* Wool alone, or *British* and *Irish* only, the Consequence would be, that, if our Wool could not find its Way into *France*, *French* Wool would ~~not~~ find its Way hither, to the pulling down and keeping low the Price of *British* and *Irish* Wool. Now, tho' it was to be sold back to *France* in Cloth, whoever might be enriched by it, would it amend the Matter to the Grower of Wool here, admitting, what is here supposed, the Want of a competent Number of Hands to work up *all*, *French*, *British*, and *Irish* too.

But, as it cannot probably be the Case, that *French* Wool is worth Nothing without ours, and yet so useful with it, we may rather suppose (that sorry ~~as~~ as it is) it will, by its self, make a Cloathing, though meaner and coarser; and that the greater the Allay of *French* Wool is, when mixed with ours, the more is the Labour, and the worse the Commodity; consequently, the less the Allay, the less Labour, and the better Goods. Hence I argue, That because with a less Quantity of Wool, *British* or *Irish*, the *French* must either lessen the Quantity, or lower the Quality of those Goods, with which they are now said to rival us in foreign Markes; in the one Case, the Damage to us would be proportionably less, upon the Foot of what I have

have mention'd, as 150 is to 500; in the other probably, none at all; and, in the first, even that small Proportion of Damage would, not improbably, be made up to us, by the Consumption the *French* themselves should make of our Wool, in their own way of Wearing; which, if not mixed with their own and wrought up by themselves, perhaps they might not be permitted to wear in any Shape.

But, last of all; if this my Way of thinking was altogether erroneous, and not only the Success of our Woollen Trade but the Price of our Wool depend entirely upon our not permitting any Part of it to go abroad unmanufactured, great Stress, I find, has been laid upon the flourishing State of that Manufactory, during King *William* and Queen *Anne's* Wars, "when the Generation of Smugglers had no Opportunities of exporting Wool to *France*." This is offered, not only as a demonstrative Proof of a Return of the same Advantages, to the Manufacturer and the Merchant, under the same Circumstances, but to the *Grower* also. Now, with Regard to this very high Price of Wool, so much talked of in one Part of King *William's* Reign, I have heard it accounted for, from a Concurrence of Circumstances, of another Nature. A grievous Rot in *Ireland*, about that Time, had almost destroyed the whole Species

ciés of Sheep in that Kingdom; which, added to the bad State of the Coin about the same Time, and the Apprehensions of its being called in, (as accordingly it was) was a double Reason for advancing it; and though the latter was transient in its Nature, and extended alike to other Things, the former was of longer Duration, and could not cease, but by Degrees, and those slower, on Account of the Advantages which our Woollen Trade *confessedly* received from the War itself; which, however propitious it might prove to the Manufactory, WOOLL nevertheless fell a Price considerably before the Conclusion of it; and for three or four Years before the Peace, (I speak it of my own Remembrance) tho' not altogether so low, as at present, yet was it, as then accounted, very low. It was such a falling Commodity, that some of the richest Grasers in the Kingdom, had, at the Time of the Peace, the Wool of several Years by them, reserved till that Event should happen, in Expectation of its being advanced by Means thereof. Which I only mention to shew it probable, that (whatever other Advantages are deducible from thence) *keeping our Wool at Home*, is not (of itself) a constant, certain, adequate Cause of raising the Price of it to the Grower; and yet being (as hath been well observed) *more peculiarly the Growth of our Country,*

Country, than any other Thing; the Price of it is of great Consequence, and, next to the Employment of the People, may well deserve to be looked upon as a NATIONAL CONCERN.

FINIS.



